

SEP 4 1959

Dear Dr. Rotblat

Thank you for the material on the Pugwash conference which I hope to read carefully with interest.

I have read the summary statement and conclusions. I could not disagree with them as far as they go, but they seem to me so futile that I would not care to join publicly with them.

In view of the present poverty of mutual trust and godd faith among the great powers, the agreements you recommend would be untrustworthy and unenforceable. If the Powers could come to some agreement on nuclear controls I might have more hopes. Even here we have to lean over backwards to glean any hope of a liberal attitude on the part of the USSR-- and this in an area where automatic controls have some hope of usefulness. I do not see how an agreement to relax security restrictions on scientific work couldm possibly be enforced, much as we might all wish this eventuality.

I have some concern that futile proposals may do worse harm than waste your time. Western science is already so much more openly accessible-- you will have no trouble finding lists of papers published from Fort Detrick and from Porton-- that we can hardly conceal that work is going on in biological warfare laboratories; with the pervasive secrecy in every aspect of Russian activity, a futile recommendation to abolish such laboratories can only be one more source of propaganda harassment/ that will operate mainly in one direction.

Biological warfare certainly gives us just one more motive to ^{cure} ~~attack~~ the insanity of contemporary world politics. If I can make any contribution to quieting the sources of mutual suspicion I will do my best. I do not think that gilding the lily of nuclear annihilation is such a contribution.

Of course I deeply appreciate the humanitarian concern that must have motivated you and your colleagues in organizing this conference. I also recognize that the views I have just expressed are debatable.

Yours sincerely,

ROTBLAT